

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 12265 111605Z

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T CAIRO 12265

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, EG

SUBJECT: ISRAELI ACTIONS IN GULF OF SUEZ

THIS TELEGRAM SUMMARIZES MY DISCUSSIONS TODAY WITH FAHMY AND OSAMA AL BAZ ON ISRAELI ACTIONS IN GULF OF SUEZ. SEPTTEL FOLLOWS WITH DETAILS.

SUMMARY: FIRST FAHMY'S CHEF DE CABINET OSAMA AL BAZ AND THEN FAHMY HIMSELF RAISED WITH ME SEPTEMBER 11 IN VERY STRONG TERMS ISRAEL'S CONTINUED HARASSMENT OF AMOCO DRILLING ACTIVITIES IN GULF OF SUEZ. EGYPT COMPLETELY AND CATEGORICALLY REJECTS THE ISRAELI STAND AND EXPECTS THAT USG WILL TAKE A "MORE FIRM" POSITION WITH ISRAELIS. FAHMY SAID THAT IF ISRAEL CONTINUES IT ACTIONS, EGYPT HAS MEANS OF RETALIATING. THOUGH IT DOES NOT WANT TO DO SO, SUCH OPTIONS INCLUDE RENEWING UNEF MANDATE FOR ONLY THREE MONTHS, REFUSING ANY FURTHER JOINT COMMISSION MEETINGS, PREVENTING ISRAELI CARGO FROM PASSAGE THROUGH CANAL, AND PERHAPS EVEN SABOTAGE OF ISRAELI RIGS IN GULF. FAHMY EMPHASIZED SERIOUSNESS OF EGYPTIAN POSITION AND SAID HE WOULD HAVE TO TAKE ISSUE TO SADAT AS "POLITICAL MATTER"; SADAT WOULD REACT VERY STRONGLY. I RESPONDED THAT WE WERE IN TOUCH WITH ISRAELIS TO ASSERT THE RIGHT OF AN AMERICAN COMPANY TO DRILL ITS CONCESSION AREA AND THAT WE ARE TRYING TO WORK OUT A PRACTICAL SOLUTION WITHOUT LETTING THE MATTER BECOME A MAJOR CONFRONTATION. I URGED THAT EGYPTIANS NOT TAKE ANY PRECIPITATE ACTIONS. FAHMY

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SAID HE INTENDED TO RAISE THIS ISSUE WITH THE SECRETARY

WHEN HE GOES TO U.S., BUT TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE WITH SEPTEMBER
21 DEADLINE FAST APPROACHING. I SAID I WOULD KEEP IN CLOSE
TOUCH WITH HIM ON THIS MATTER WHICH WE WERE TRYING TO RESOLVE
URGENTLY AND PRACTICALLY. END SUMMARY
MATTHEWS

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NNN

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